

JEAN-CLAUDE MARTINI

**ON CORRECTLY UNDERSTANDING
MAOISM**

FLORENCE, ITALY

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WORKING PEOPLE OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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On the Occasion of the 135th Birth Anniversary of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Great
Leader of the Chinese People and World Proletariat

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ORIGINS, DEVELOPMENT AND SPREADING OF MAOISM

The era in which we live is one of great and sudden changes; the irreversible crisis of capitalism increasingly precipitates, but the communist movement is, at present, too weak to unleash the final offensive and establish socialism, primarily in imperialist countries. Then, it is dutiful for communists to scientifically analyze and review, on the basis of the actual conditions of the country in which they work and the historical period in which we live, the revolutionary theory which guided them so far.

Great leader Comrade Kim Jong Il already in the 1960s set about a systematic and dialectical study of Marxism-Leninism, when he led members of the Korean Association of Social Scientists in the analysis of more than 30 works by Marx, Engels and Lenin. The conclusion, exposed in his talk to Social Scientists in 1966 recollected under the title, ***On Correctly Analyzing and Reviewing the History of the Preceding Revolutionary Ideology of the Working Class***, as far as Marxism and Leninism are concerned, is as follows:

«Marxism is [...] a revolutionary doctrine based on an analysis of social, economic and class relations in Britain, Germany and other developed capitalist countries. So this doctrine does not provide solutions to the theoretical and practical problems in the revolution and construction in former colonies and semi-colonies which make up the overwhelming majority of the nations on earth.

«Leninism was based on an analysis of the historical environment of the imperialist era and reflected the requirements of the revolutionary struggle in a country in the initial period following the seizure of power by its working class. Lenin lived in an era when imperialists held undivided sway in the world and the first socialist state had just been born».

It is also necessary to point out that Korean communists always put emphasis on the main aspect of the preceding revolutionary ideology of the working class, that is, its indelible historical merits. In his March 31, 1982 masterpiece titled, ***On the Juche Idea***, he explains as follows the historical merits of Marxism and Leninism, comparing them with the ones of the Juche idea:

«In the mid-19th century Marx and Engels propounded Marxism. Thus they highlighted the historical mission and a path of liberation that had to be followed by the working class that appeared on the arena of struggle and stimulated the fight against capital, ushering in the rise of the international communist movement. Lenin developed Marxism and advanced Leninism in accordance with the new historical conditions whereby capitalism had entered the phase of imperialism, with the result that he inspired the working class and the rest of the people to the struggle to destroy imperialist strongholds and to achieve freedom and liberation. This marked the beginning of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Our leader created the great Juche idea after acquiring a deep insight into the requirements of a new era when the oppressed and humiliated masses of the people became masters of their own destiny. Thus he developed their struggle for Chajusong onto a higher plane and opened up the age of Juche, a new era in the development of human history».

From these right remarks we start again today in the analysis of the new phase of the communist thought, developed between Leninism and the Juche idea, a phase which the great leader did not analyze: Maoism. Maoism is the third, superior stage of the communist thought after Marxism and

Leninism, and it, too, did provide answers to the new problems which Marxism and Leninism, for the reasons indicated by great Comrade Kim Jong Il, did not undertake.

Maoism arose amid the flames of the Chinese revolution in the 1930s and 1940s, under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung, the top leader of this revolution. Mao Tse-tung inherited, defended, enriched and developed Marxism-Leninism, bringing it to a new and higher stage of development; his thought had born as an answer to the requirements of the Chinese revolution and the context in which the latter started and continued until its victory. Clear proofs of this are the theories about the New Democracy and the encircling of towns from the countryside, formulated in light of the fact that China, enormous country with wide countryside, was, in that era, a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country. It follows that, logically, we communists of imperialist country cannot refer to these theories and tactics, because we work in countries and in an era totally different from the country and the era in which Mao Tse-tung lived and worked.

The originality of Maoism and its more advanced characteristics with respect to Marxism and Leninism emerged in a certain phase of socialist construction in China and the history of the international communist movement: when modern revisionists took power in the USSR and a number of other socialist countries, Mao Tse-tung was the first in standing against them and unmasking them on quite a number of important theoretical questions of Marxism-Leninism they attacked, distorted and reneged. Among these was the questions of the “personality cult” and the “peaceful coexistence”: revisionists upheld the banner of the “struggle against personality cult” to infringe upon the unity of the Bolshevik Party, the Soviet and world people's masses around Stalin and be able to realize their projects of peaceful and gradual restoration of capitalism in the first socialist country in the world; in foreign affairs, this resulted in the “new course of peaceful coexistence”, by replacing the promotion of world revolution with bourgeois competition with capitalist countries. These “turns” resulted in the progressive weakening of the international communist movement and the exhaustion of the propulsive thrust of socialist revolution. Against this state of affairs, the Chinese communists with Mao Tse-tung at their head promoted and launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1966, in order to prevent also the restoration of capitalism in China by the counter-revolutionaries and anti-Party individuals.

This great mass movement made sure that Maoism, from a mere application of Marxism-Leninism to the Chinese reality, became an internationally valid revolutionary theory, capable of inspiring to struggle and revolution masses of millions of men in the world, also in subsequent years. Mao Tse-tung's Works were translated in hundreds of languages and published in every country, so that the revolutionary people could study them more easily. From this study, some comrades concluded that Maoism apported the following contributions to the communist thought:

- 1) The protracted revolutionary people's war;
- 2) The New Democracy revolutions;
- 3) Class struggle in socialist countries;
- 4) The mass line;
- 5) The two-lines struggle inside the Party;
- 6) Communist party is not only a subject, but also an object of socialist revolution.

This list is valid only generally: this means that not all these contributions are useful and practically work in every situation and every country without any discriminating factor. We mentioned above the New Democracy revolutions, which take place only in colonial and semi-colonial countries ruled by feudal or semi-feudal systems, not in imperialist or advanced-capitalist countries. It is thus unavoidable that, in our times, Maoism presents historical, theoretical and organizational limitations that we must analyze in order to overcome them and advance in the construction of the world revolution, starting from one's own country: as the Korean great leaders often said, the world revolution today will triumph only as a whole of national revolutions. It must therefore be recognized as a merit of the Peruvian communists the discovery and proclamation of Maoism as a

third, superior stage of communist thought in 1992, but we must proceed to an analysis of the era in which this step was made and to the steps for us to be made, required by the present times.

1. The historical limitations of Maoism and the solutions found by the Juche idea

In our approach to Maoism we must reject two tendencies, seemingly opposed to each other but actually complementary: one, rightist, aiming at belittling the contributions by Maoism and slander, falsify and distort the historical reality of the socialist construction in China under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung; the other, leftist, tending to consider Maoism in a dogmatic way, as if nothing had changed in the world since Mao Tse-tung lived and worked, and blindly raising the banner of Maoism as if the communist thought was always stuck in the era in which it had born, developed and spread. They are two tendencies equally present and strong in the communist movement of imperialist countries and prevent socialist revolution from advancing and the communist movement to reborn and grow stronger.

Mao Tse-tung lived in a period in which imperialism, after having overcome its first general crisis for absolute over-production of capital by means of two world wars, ushered in a period of recovery and expansion which came to an end only in the last period of his life. In that era, the communist movement was strong and advanced from victory to victory on a worldwide scale, from Cuba to Vietnam through Algeria, and in capitalist countries, too, the working masses won new victories and new rights under the leadership of communists, though it was affected by many limits owing to the predominance, in the communists parties, of modern revisionists.

When Mao Tse-tung died, in 1976, the socialist camp, though already set on the road of pacific and gradual restoration of capitalism, was still alive. For this reason, Maoism could not provide answers to the issues related to the collapsing of that camp between the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s and to the subsequent weakening of the communist movement in all countries of the world. Indeed, the thesis repeatedly relaunched by the Chinese communists during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution according to which Maoism is «Marxism-Leninism of the era in which imperialism is heading for total collapse and socialism is advancing to world-wide victory» has been proved wrong by facts and history: between 1989 and 1992 it was capitalism which “won”, not socialism. This shows also that Maoism, not being a new and original theory like the Juche idea, presents the same historical and theoretical limitations as Marxism-Leninism, rightly analyzed by great Comrade Kim Jong Il, though it overcame a number of them and tried to overcome others. For example, as far as the question of “personality cult” is concerned, Mao Tse-tung re-established the right Leninist outlook on the relation between the party, the leaders, the classes and the masses. He even presented a theory concerning a right and a wrong kind of personality cult, in 1958. It is nonetheless a fact that modern revisionists could took power with a line centred on the “struggle against personality cult” because Marxism-Leninism never solved the issues related to the essence of the leader and his role in the revolutionary process (about it, only a paragraph of Lenin's work *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder* and a 1963 anti-revisionist article by the Chinese Communist Party, titled, *On the Question of Stalin*, which reiterates the principles of that paragraph, can be found); this was a factor which only the Korean communists analyzed in detail.

So, it is equally clear that Mao Tse-tung could not, for anagraphical reasons, provide a scientific theoretical analysis about why the first socialist countries had dissolved; the only ones having done that in the whole world were great Comrades Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, and this gave new lifeline and vitality to the Juche idea, making it capable of answering in a right and revolutionary way to the challenges of our times.

The limitations of Maoism, when not correctly analyzed or even ignored, affect still today in various shapes and size communists and their outlook. They absolutize the role of modern revisionism and point it as the main, or the only, cause of the collapsing of the first socialist countries. It is a wrong idea which does not correspond to reality: was it actually as they say, it

could not be explained why some socialist countries led by modern revisionists survived the collapsing of the Berlin Wall, though they made identical (or nearly identical) concessions to capitalism compared to the ones made by other revisionist countries who saw the total restoration of it and their shifting to the imperialists' vassals camp. The main reason is that the communists parties of the first socialist countries did not rely on the people's masses strength, nor did they solved in an independent way the issues of socialist construction which arose, but blindly followed the Soviet Union neglecting their specific conditions under the pretext of the "universality of Marxist-Leninist principles". They were not able to adequately lead the communist transformation of society and let bourgeois ideas and imperialist cultures spread among the masses, particularly the young generations, with the result that the cause of socialism suffered many setbacks, which led to the situation in which we are nowadays. Modern revisionism, as a bourgeois current, took advantaged of this already-existing state of affairs and exacerbated it until it provoked the disintegration of the socialist system itself in those countries. For this reason, it can be said that it was a reason of this degeneration, but not its main cause.

Other limitations of Maoism are to be found in the analysis of its contributions themselves, and particularly in the third and the fifth contributions of the six mentioned above: from the experience of socialism in China and the balance of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, Mao Tse-tung discovered that bourgeoisie reproduces itself in the state institution and the communist party itself, and that the way to fight it is the two-lines struggle aimed at unmasking it starting from its ideology and world outlook, as well as its attempts, in the organizational field, to put a brake to the march of socialist society towards communism. However, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was defeated in 1976 and capitalist restoration began two years later, without any constructive opposition by the soundest, revolutionary wing of the Communist Party, who was even faltered by reactionary suppression though it could count on generous, heroical, young comrades tested in the class struggle and emerged from the struggle against bourgeois and anti-Party lines during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and though it had achievements of Maoism right under their eyes. To the problems posed by Maoism and not solved by it, an answer was given from the practice of socialist construction in Juche Korea in the 1970s: President Kim Il Sung launched the Three-Revolution Red Flag Movement, with which started, at the same time, the ideological, technical and cultural revolutions, led by the principle of intellectualize and working-classize the whole society. This strengthened at the same time the single-minded unity which has always characterized Korean-style socialism, being this centred on the leader-Party-masses triad, which in turn has its roots on the theoretical framework of the Juche idea. Such unity would be impossible without the ideological transformation of society into a communist one and its unification around the leadership and the revolutionary ideas of the leader. This aspect is ignored by those who refer to the preceding revolutionary theories and take pride in advancing wrong theories about "collective elaborations" and "collegiality of leadership", totally neglecting the indispensable role of the leader and forgetting that the revolutionary theories of the working class have always been propounded by its top leaders. This intersects with the inability of these people to understand how, actually, the formation of a new bourgeoisie in socialism is a not as economical, as mainly political, happening this phenomenon on the basis of the survival of old bourgeois ideas in the so-called common sense. It is just this survival of old bourgeois ideas which makes that there are individuals who, though occupying posts of responsibility in the communist party and the socialist state, are opposed to the necessary transformations and steps to be made to reach communism. We can eliminate this danger only if we transform the whole society on an unique revolutionary ideology, compacting all the party, state and people's masses around the leader, not allowing the slightest deviation to take place and resolutely struggling against any external influence which may run counter to this ideology and damage this unity. This clearly does not mean that we have to suppress different opinion inside the Party or prevent them from being expressed, but to privilege the principle of collectivism on the individualistic one centred on one's own opinion; in a word, it is about reviewing and updating the Leninist system of democratic centralism accordingly to the concrete conditions. The formation of a

new bourgeoisie in socialism is not, therefore, an unavoidable phenomenon, and it is also wrong to fight it with sectarian methods which split the revolutionary forces and, in the final analysis, benefit our enemies.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAOISM FROM OTHER COMMUNIST FORCES, THEIR LIMITATIONS AND THE NEED TO OVERCOME THEM

There are, by the way, communist parties, beyond the above-mentioned Peruvian Communist Party, who made interesting contributions to Maoism starting from their experience and balance of the history of the communist movement and proletarian revolution. But it is dutiful to distinguish between Maoism and the contributions to these comrades to Maoism. While the former occupies a position in a well-defined historical context, the latter enjoy a greater freshness and renew themselves continuously thanks to new experiences and changes appeared in the general situation. They, however, inevitably repropose the historical and theoretical limitations of the ideology on which they base themselves: they think they can use the same theory in a totally different context, compared to the one in which it had born and developed, unilaterally focusing on the common aspects between the two eras; they do not understand how, dialectically, independence and socialism are strictly related, how the former is indispensable condition of the latter and how this is the era of independence and not yet of socialism. Today's communist movement is weak, but ever more countries which uphold their sovereignty and actively resist imperialism, though not being ruled by the dictatorship of the proletariat, compare on the international arena. It is an aspect that we cannot allow ourselves to ignore, nor can we keep mum about their experience or belittling or even slander them under the pretext that they are not socialist countries. They too, will advance (or come back) to socialism when a communist party able to lead the people's masses to take power and their destiny in their hands will emerge.

Because this could happen, however, the communist movement must arm itself of a new ideology suited to the requirements of the changing times: the international communist movement greets its reborn nowadays on the bases of the principles of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism. A proof of this are the increasingly party and organizations around the world who sign the 1992 Pyongyang Declaration even in this recent period. The mere anti-imperialist solidarity towards People's Korea or superficial approbations of this or that principle of the Juche idea are not enough. We must understand that the communist thought reached a new stage, the one of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism, after having got through Marxism, Leninism, Maoism and Kimilsungism.

What does the superiority of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism on the preceding revolutionary theories is synthesized in? Schematizing, it is summarized in the following points:

- 1) The main role of man in revolution and construction;
- 2) The definition of independence, creativity and consciousness as fundamental attributes of the social being who autonomously shape its destiny;
- 3) The role of the leader in the revolutionary process and socialist construction;
- 4) The new definition of the national question and the essence and meaning of nationalism;
- 5) The reconditioning on scientific and concrete tracks of dialectical materialism and the principle of unity and struggle of opposites;
- 6) The new, creative definition on a practical base of the issue of the leading class of revolution and the criterion of class belonging;
- 7) Independence as a staple of every action of the communist party, both on internal and external fronts;
- 8) The question of succession: the leader must not confine himself to inherit the ideological legacy of his predecessor, but also and primarily acquire his moral traits and virtues;
- 9) Communists lead the revolution basing themselves on their own forces and under their own responsibility and starting from the specific traits of the context in which they work, not on

order of someone else.

To these points, the above-mentioned contributions by Maoism borrowed in the Juche idea must be added, with adequate corrections and reviewings in the light of the new experience acquired by the communist movement, both in Korea and in the rest of the world: class struggle in socialist society, mass line and the Party as not only a subject but also an object of the revolution. New Democracy, too, under the name of “national liberation”, can be found to a certain extent in the Juche idea. Between 1945 and 1948 Korea, too, got through this phase, referred to as “advanced democracy”. Someone objected to Juche theory of denying the existence of objective laws in the revolution, with the pretext of independence and specificities: it is a false objection, originating by a wrong or inexistent knowledge of the principles of this theory. The Juche idea does not “reinvents science”: indeed, it is thanks to the enormous experience accumulated by the international communist movement that nowadays every party can lead the revolution in full independence and consciousness, without having to strictly stick to past experience and pre-established theories. Great leader Comrade Kim Jong Il explicitly clarified:

«When I say that social laws function through man's activity, I do not deny the objective character of social laws and possible spontaneity in the social movement. If a certain socio-economic condition is created, a social law corresponding to it functions inevitably and therefore it assumes an objective character as a natural law does. Spontaneity in the social movement is due to a relatively low level of man's independence, creativity and consciousness and to the absence of the social system under which people can display them to the full. With the growth in man's independence, creativity and consciousness and with the establishment of the social system which ensures a full display of these qualities, man will work better in keeping with the objective laws and the range of spontaneity will narrow»¹.

In fact, we can distinguish five phases through which the communist thought got: Marxism (1848-1917), Leninism (1917-1966), Maoism (1966-1976), Kimilsungism (1976-2012) and Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism (since 2012).

Advancing with independent and creative mettle in solving all problems, rejecting any kind of dogmatism, socialism and communism will gradually triumph in every country of the world and the cause of the complete emancipation of humankind will win its total and definitive victory.

¹ Kim Jong Il, *The Juche Philosophy is an Original Revolutionary Philosophy*, July 26, 1996, *Selected Works*, vol. 14, p. 176.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of understanding the cultural context of the research. It highlights the need for researchers to be sensitive to the values and beliefs of the communities they are studying. This is particularly important in the field of education, where cultural differences can significantly impact learning outcomes.

The second part of the paper focuses on the methodology used in the study. It describes the qualitative approach adopted, which involves in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The researchers aimed to explore the experiences and perceptions of the participants, rather than testing a specific hypothesis.

The third part of the paper presents the findings of the study. It discusses the various themes that emerged from the data, such as the role of family in education and the influence of community norms. The researchers found that there were significant differences in the way that different cultural groups viewed education and learning.

The final part of the paper discusses the implications of the findings for practice. It suggests that educators and policymakers should take into account the cultural context of their students and communities when designing educational programs. This could involve providing additional support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds or adapting teaching methods to better suit different learning styles.